

Washington, DC – House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Ranking Member Darrell Issa (R-CA) today voted against Speaker Nancy Pelosi's so-called 'American Recovery and Reinvestment Act' calling it nothing more than a \$1.1 trillion earmark designed to expand government on the backs of the American taxpayers using money we do not have.

"There is little guarantee of any short-term gain, but there is no question this will saddle our children and grandchildren with over a trillion dollars of additional debt," said Issa. "You would think that given the severity of this economic crisis, the Democrats in Congress who have crafted this plan would ensure that every dollar spent will help create jobs and jumpstart our economy. Sadly, this is not the case."

The Democratic proposal contains \$137 billion for the creation of 32 new programs - that's 38% of all spending in the current bill. Seventeen of these new programs have never been authorized by the Congress. This on top of the \$76 billion being spent to expand 60 existing government programs - nineteen of which have been described as "ineffective" or "results not demonstrated" by the Office of Management and Budget. The bill also excludes good government provisions that would prohibit use of economic stimulus funds for lobbying or political activities.

"President Obama talked about the need to make hard choices," Issa said. "Given the overtones of his campaign, President Obama has an opportunity and obligation to step in and direct congressional leaders to close these loopholes."

Despite President Obama's pledge to be open to Republican ideas and inputs on the stimulus, Congressional Democrats refused to consider three amendments offered by Rep. Issa that would have prohibited the use of stimulus funds for lobbying or political purposes, fixing flawed oversight provisions, and creating a non-partisan commission to investigate the causes of the financial crisis.

Issa also criticized the lack of funding in the so-called stimulus bill for infrastructure projects, "While billed as a transportation, infrastructure and energy investment, a closer look at the Pelosi 'stimulus' bill shows that only three percent of the \$825 billion will go toward road and highway construction," he noted. "Democrats should be honest with the American people about what's in this bill – the focus is not public works projects, but a laundry list of welfare programs that Democrats have sought to expand for decades."

A non-partisan analysis conducted by the Congressional Budget Office revealed that of the \$30 billion set aside in highway spending, less than \$4 billion would occur over the next two years. Of the \$18.5 billion proposed for renewable energy, less than \$3 billion would be spent by 2011 and of \$14 billion for school construction, less than \$7 billion would be spent in the first two years.